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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JULY 16, 2009

Summary: Reports on the proceedings of the 15th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) currently underway in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt) dominated headlines in all newspapers on Thursday. Newspapers reported that Pakistan and India "reiterated their stated positions for durable peace" at the NAM summit. Some newspapers reported a "deadlock in initial talks" between Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India. Also front-paged were reports that "13 militants were killed by security forces" in fresh clashes in Swat.

Most major dailies ran editorials on the on-going NAM summit. The second largest Urdu daily, "Nawa-i-Waqt," criticized the NAM and noted that "this organization has become a dead horse with its leaders wasting their countries' money every three years." Another Urdu daily, "Pakistan," hoped that "Pakistani rulers would not be apologetic about Kashmir issue and would tell the world in categorical terms that the Kashmir dispute is the core problem between India and Pakistan." End Summary.

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News Stories  
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"PM Sees Forward Move In Ties With India; Suggests 8-Point Plan For NAM To Ensure Peace" "The News" (07/16)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, while noting some forward movement in ties with India, has said durable peace in South Asia is achievable and it will be facilitated by the resolution of all outstanding disputes, including Jammu and Kashmir.... He suggested NAM to pursue eight-point program to advance the cause of peace and development."

"Pakistan, India Reiterate Their Stated Positions" "Dawn" (07/16)

"Indian and Pakistani leaders spelt out on Wednesday their ideas for 'durable peace' at the 15th Non-Aligned Movement summit with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh calling for the dismantling of terror networks and Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani demanding resolution of outstanding disputes. Their remarks at the summit in this Egyptian Red Sea resort indicate that they would stick to their stated positions in their meeting on Thursday designed to explore ways for normalization of their relations that have remained strained since the 26/11 Mumbai attack."

"Deadlock In Initial Pak-India Talks" "Dawn" (07/16)

"Talks between Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India held in the Egyptian resort town on Tuesday night failed to make any progress on

the issue of resumption of composite dialogue. Now observers here are pinning hopes on the Prime Ministers of the two countries to achieve a breakthrough in their meeting on Thursday."

"India Wants Kashmir, Sir Creek Out Of Talks" "The News" (07/16)

"India has asked Pakistan to scrap the composite dialogue initiated about 15 years ago, urging a change in the format of talks between the two countries. With the new proposal, New Delhi has hinted at removing the Sir Creek dispute from the agenda of talks and bringing about a change in the status of the Kashmir dispute that has been listed as one of the two major items namely Jammu and Kashmir and Peace and Security."

"U.S. Welcomes Indo-Pak Talks" "The News," "The Nation" website (07/16)

"The United States on Wednesday welcomed the imminent meeting between Pakistani and Indian Prime Ministers in Sharm El-Sheikh and expressed the hope that the high-level contacts between the two nuclear South Asian nations would lead to better understanding towards improved relations. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robert Blake also welcomed the reports that Pakistan will proceed with prosecution of militants accused of involvement in Mumbai attacks."

"No U.S. Role In Gilani, Singh Meeting: Blake" "Daily Times" (07/16)

"U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robert Blake has said the U.S. had no role in the meeting between Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and his Indian counterpart, Manmohan Singh, in Sharm El-Sheikh."

"Top Commander, 13 Others Killed In Swat" "The News" (07/16)

"Security forces on Wednesday claimed to have killed the most wanted terrorist leader Abu Laith and 13 other Taliban militants, including two foreigners during the ongoing military operation 'Rah-e-Rast' in Swat valley amid the arrival of the displaced people."

"Taliban Commander Relatives Held" "Pakistan Observer" (07/16)

"The security forces have arrested four close relatives of Taliban commander Shah Doran on Nowshera-Mardan border on Wednesday."

"Air Strike, Rocket Attacks In Waziristan" "Dawn" (07/16)

"Five militants and two civilians were killed and seven others injured in air strikes and rocket attacks in South Waziristan and the adjacent Jandola region on Wednesday. According to security officials, planes shelled two compounds occupied by militants in Sararogha and Laddha areas of South Waziristan."

"Six Suspected Militants Arrested" "The News" (07/16)

"Security forces arrested six suspected militants and demolished a house during a search operation in Bara tehsil in Khyber Agency on Wednesday."

"2 Killed In North Waziristan Agency (NWA) For Curfew Violation" "The News" (07/16)

"The security forces killed two tribesmen for allegedly violating curfew in the troubled North Waziristan Agency (NWA) on Wednesday."

"Zawahiri Asks Pakistanis To Join Jihad" "Dawn" (07/16)

"Ayman Al Zawahiri, the Al Qaeda number two, has urged Pakistanis to support militants in their battle against a U.S.-led 'crusade' which he said threatened the country's existence. In an eight-minute, 49-second English-language video called 'My Muslim Brothers and Sisters in Pakistan,' Zawahiri said that U.S. intervention in Pakistan's military and politics could break up the country."

"More IDP Families Back Home" "Dawn" (07/16)

"The return of internally displaced people to their homes gained

momentum on Wednesday when 1277 families left for Swat and Buner districts. The Emergency Response Unit (ERU) announced that after completion of Phase-II of the voluntary return plan 'Naway Sahar' on July 16, Phase III for the IDPs living in camps would commence on July 17 and would continue till July 20."

"U.S. Sets Terms For Talks With Taliban" "Dawn," "The News" (07/16)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said on Wednesday that America was willing to engage those Taliban fighters, who renounced violence and agreed to help build a free and open society. In a major foreign policy speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, Secretary Clinton also acknowledged Pakistan's key position in bringing peace to Afghanistan and announced that she planned to visit Islamabad in the autumn."

"UN Probe Team Arrives" "Dawn" (07/16)

"An advance team of the UN commission to probe into Benazir Bhutto's assassination arrived in Islamabad on Wednesday. The members of the commission were expected to be in the country until July 19, a source said."

"Oil For NATO Smuggled Back To Pakistan: Asim" "The News" (07/16)

"The government on Wednesday conceded that oil supply to NATO forces in Afghanistan is dumped in Pakistan, which hurts the national kitty as well as the economy, Prime Minister's Advisor on Petroleum and Natural Resources Dr. Asim Hussain told the National Assembly Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Resources."

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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"Ineffective NAM," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (07/16)

"This organization has become a dead horse with its leaders wasting their countries' money every three years. India is the founder of the organization and what is happening in Kashmir is an open violation of the Havana Declaration...."

"Possibility Of Pak-India Dialogue Resumption," an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (07/16)

"We expect from the Pakistani rulers that they would not be apologetic about Kashmir issue and would tell the world in categorical terms that the Kashmir dispute is the core problem. Moreover, only that resolution of the issue would be accepted which would be acceptable to the 99% of the people who have the illusion that objective realities of Kashmir could be suppressed on the pretext of war against terrorism."

"Sharm El-Sheikh: What Will Be The Outcome Of Pak-India Premiers' Meeting," an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (07/16)

"Sharm El-Sheikh is called the city of peace and the meeting of Pak-India heads of governments there is a welcome development. Pakistan leadership should present its stand forcefully, making it clear that the desire for dialogue is Pakistan's decency rather than weakness."

"Pak-India Relations: Build Bridges Not Walls," an editorial in Lahore-based populist Urdu daily "Waqt" (cir. 10,000) (07/16)

"India should not lag behind on Pakistan's offer for talks in order to establish lasting peace in the region. This will also allow Pakistan and India to work jointly against terrorism."

"Pak-India Dialogue And NAM Summit," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 10,000) (07/16)

"The deadlock between India and Pakistan gave advantage to those forces which wanted to create justification of intervention by pushing them toward conflict.... If both the countries agree to positive steps for improving the relations then it would be

exemplary for the progress of South Asia's economy and social development."

"Why Talk To India?," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (07/16)

"The fact is that while India has shown good economic indicators and has generally been courted by the West over the last few years, all its efforts can go awry without being at peace with Pakistan. Non-state actors can pull the two sides to war and while such a conflict would be deadly for Pakistan, any victory would be more than pyrrhic for India.... Corollary: both countries need peace. Caveat: they can't move forward without respecting each other's sensitivities. The time for one-upmanship is over."

"Hope For Peace," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (07/16)

"Lasting peace demands a change of strategy rather than that of tactics. Peace is not just an ideal, it is also a long-term realism. Peace and cooperation between the two great South Asian nations can guarantee prosperity and development on both sides of the international frontiers. It is time that improvement of Indo-Pak relations be transformed into a process rather than an isolated and ephemeral incident."

"Looming Threat Of Maoists," an op-ed by Mohammad Jamil in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (07/16)

"Despite the rhetoric of having good relations with Pakistan, India is keeping the focus entirely spotted on Pakistan to demonize it as a state, denigrate its agencies and its military, to project it as a state sponsoring terrorism globally, to isolate it internationally with a view to reaping a harvest of gains. But this path is fraught with dangers because the escalation of tensions and then war between the two nuclear states could be disastrous. It is, therefore, in the best interest of both India and Pakistan to resolve all outstanding issues and resume composite dialogue process."

"Making Of Sideshow Artists," an op-ed Javed Naqvi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/16)

"By carrying their laundry bags to regional and international summits, albeit to meet on the so-called sidelines, the two countries (India-Pakistan) come across as churlish, immature neighbors. This is not an encouraging attribute for the nuclear-weapons states they both have gate-crashed their way to become. One day they declare to each other - and thereby to the rest of the world - that their peace process is irreversible come what may. The next day their envoys would be seeking the first available agony aunt to offload their all-too-familiar travails to, be it about life-threatening terrorism or life-giving water resources among their other unresolved bilateral topics."

"Afghanistan: Pizza And Pashakal," an op-ed by I.M. Mohsin in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (07/16)

"It is becoming clear that the neo-cons, either due to their obsessions or bad faith, misled George W, the raw, to fight against history. Obama is far too sharp not to have realized what is hurting the U.S. However, the known lobbies are also arraigned against a change. This is being inflamed by the presidential election due in Kabul. If history holds, the Pashtuns will not duck attacking as per their proverb, 'The heavens will remain as they are, but the foreign rulers will be gone.'"

"The Moscow Summit," an op-ed by Tariq Fatemi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/16)

"Coming at a time when the U.S. is finding it increasingly difficult to supply its troops in Afghanistan by the land corridor through Pakistan, the Russian offer is important, both in terms of the political message that it sends to the region, as well as in easing a major U.S. concern.... First of all it sends a strong message to the international community that when it comes to confronting

terror, Russia will stand by the U.S., because Moscow feels equally concerned about the growing threat of Islamic militancy brewing in its territory where Muslims are in large numbers.... For Pakistan, the U.S.-Russia agreement on over-flights is a stark reminder that while Washington will continue to use our transit facilities, it is already exploring other options, to ensure that it does not become totally dependent on us."

"Resetting U.S.-Russia Ties," an op-ed by Nauman Asghar in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (07/16)

"Washington seeks Russia's help in finding a solution to Iran's nuclear program. Russia has close economic and strategic ties with Iran whereas the U.S. has been hostile to Iran for the past three decades.... Russian foreign policy experts are of the view that the non-resolution of Iran's nuclear stand-off with the West will keep Washington's attention distracted from working in East Europe to the detriment of Russian interests. Indubitably Washington pursues a contradictory approach as it wants Russia to join hands with the West to contain Iran's nuclear ambitions but itself goes ahead with encroaching upon Russia's traditional sphere of influence in East Europe and Central Asia. Therefore mere change of tone will not be enough but a paradigm change in thinking patterns is necessary in Washington to undo the damage done to U.S.-Russia ties."

"Old Habits Die Hard," an op-ed by Kurt Jacobsen and Sayeed Hasan Khan in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/16)

"The ballyhooed withdrawal of U.S. troops in Iraq is mostly a mirage. Obama is continuing the Bush administration's planned version of Vietnamization, changing the color of the corpses of the soldiers, but intending to keep an ample military presence there to control Iraqi oil reserves. That's surely no way to dispel distrust of US motives in the Middle East.... The U.S. under Obama is poised to replay the same pointless idiocies in Afghanistan. Sending in gung-ho military forces that can't seem to tell the difference between a guerilla group and a wedding party is no boon to regional peace. The over pour of violence into Pakistan's western regions hardly testifies in favor of the wisdom of U.S. policies."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson